

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 198593

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CENTO, EAID

SUBJECT: NEW AREAS OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION IN CENTO

1. AT LAST MEETING OF CENTO ECONOMIC COMMITTEE IN MARCH 1973, COMMITTEE AGREED ON NEED FOR IDENTIFYING NEW AREAS OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION WITHIN CENTO. ON MAY 31, THE SECRETARY GENERAL WROTE TO THE MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OF DEPUTIES, TRANSMITTING A MEMORANDUM PREPARED BY THE SECRETARIAT ON THIS SUBJECT WITH A NUMBER OF SUGGESTIONS AND REQUESTED AN EXPRESSION OF VIEWS FROM THE MEMBER GOVERN-
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MENTS.

2. BELOW IS THE TEXT OF A DRAFT REPLY WHICH WE HAVE PRE-

PARED. BEFORE TRANSMITTING IT TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL, WE WOULD LIKE TO GET UK REACTION AS WELL AS BENEFIT OF THEIR THINKING. WE WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE EMBASSY ANKARA VIEWS.

3. BEGIN TEXT: THE ECONOMIES OF THE REGIONAL COUNTRIES HAVE UNDERGONE PROFOUND CHANGE DURING CENTO'S EXISTENCE. ACCOMPLISHMENTS HAVE BEEN MANIFOLD. NEW PROBLEMS HAVE BEEN THRUST FORWARD. THE NEW AREAS OF COOPERATION OUGHT TO REFLECT THE CHANGES WHICH HAVE TAKEN PLACE. THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE ECONOMIC COMMITTEE SUGGESTS THE UTILITY OF TAKING STOCK OF WHERE WE ARE BEFORE DECIDING ON THE DIRECTION OF OUR FUTURE PROGRAM.

IT IS OUR VIEW THAT THE CENTO TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM HAS, ON THE WHOLE, BEEN A GOOD ONE. WE BELIEVE THIS TO BE A TIMELY OCCASION, HOWEVER, TO POSE TWO QUESTIONS WITH RESPECT TO THE PROGRAM: WHETHER IT REFLECTS TODAY'S PRIORITIES AND WHETHER IT WOULD NOT BE WISER FOR CENTO IN THE FUTURE TO CONCENTRATE ITS EFFORTS IN A RELATIVELY FEW HIGH PRIORITY FIELDS. WE RAISE THESE QUESTIONS FOR THREE REASONS:

A) IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT THERE ARE ALREADY SIGNIFICANT TECHNICAL EXCHANGES TAKING PLACE UNDER RCD AUSPICES AND WHAT THE REGIONAL MEMBERS PARTICULARLY WANT FROM NON-REGIONAL MEMBERS IS ACCESS TO ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY; OUR TECHNOLOGY IN SOME FIELDS IS GREATER THAN IN OTHERS;

B) IT WOULD PRESUMABLY BE POSSIBLE TO ACHIEVE A GREATER IMPACT IN SELECTED FIELDS THAN IS TRUE NOW OF A PROGRAM WHICH REACHES OUT IN MANY DIRECTIONS; (WE USE QUOTE IMPACT END QUOTE HERE IN TWO SENSE. FIRST, MORE INTENSIVE ATTENTION TO AND ACTIVITY IN FIELDS WHICH TRULY REFLECT A COMMON PRIORITY SHOULD ENLIST THE INTEREST OF MORE SENIOR PEOPLE IN GOVERNMENTS. SECONDLY, AND ESPECIALLY TO THE EXTENT THAT THESE FIELDS ARE ONES OF IMPORTANCE TO LARGE NUMBERS OF PEOPLE IN THE REGIONAL COUNTRIES, BOTH
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THE ECONOMIC AND PUBLIC RELATIONS BENEFITS SHOULD BE GREATER); AND

C) CONCENTRATION WOULD ALLOW THE SECRETARIAT TO MODIFY ITS STRUCTURE SO THAT ITS CAPABILITIES IN THESE SELECTED FIELDS WOULD BE STRENGTHENED - ENABLING IT TO PLAY A MORE ACTIVE ROLE THAN IT NOW DOES.

5. THOSE FIELDS IN WHICH THE AID PROGRAM IS NOW BEING CONCENTRATED INCLUDE AGRICULTURE, POPULATION AND HEALTH, AND HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT. THESE ARE FIELDS IN

WHICH CENTO HAS BEEN MORE OR LESS ACTIVE; THEY ARE ALSO FIELDS IN WHICH WE BELIEVE WE CAN MAKE OUR GREATEST CONTRIBUTIONS. OBVIOUSLY, WE DON'T WISH TO IMPOSE OUR PRIORITIES ON THE REGIONAL MEMBERS; ON THE CONTRARY, WE WANT TO RESPECT INsofar AS POSSIBLE THEIR ORDER OF PRIORITIES. WE SIMPLY WISH TO INDICATE THOSE FIELDS IN WHICH WE CONSIDER OURSELVES BEST EQUIPPED TO RESPOND TO THE INTERESTS OF THE REGIONAL MEMBERS.

6. BASED ON THE ECONOMIC COMMITTEE'S DISCUSSIONS OF THIS YEAR, IT IS OUR VIEW THAT THE PHRASE QUOTE NEW AREAS OF COOOERATION END QUOTE INCLUDED NEW FORMS OF COOPERATION. THUS FAR IN CENTO WE HAVE HAD BASICALLY TWO TYPES OF COOPERATION: 1) CAPITAL PROJECTS AND 2) TECHNICAL EXCHANGES AMONG EXPERTS IN A VARIETY OF FIELDS. WE BELIEVE THERE MAY BE ROOM FOR A NEW FORM - EXCHANGE OF VIEWS AND EXPERIENCE AMONG OFFICIALS FROM REGIONAL AND NON-REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS WHOSE RESPONSIBILITIES EXTEND TO BROAD FIELDS OF POLICY-MAKING. JUST TO TAKE A PURELY HYPOTHETICAL EXAMPLE - EDUCATION. A MEETING OF BROAD-GAUGED OFFICIALS MIGHT BE CONVENED ONCE A YEAR TO EXCHANGE VIEWS ON AN AGENDA WORKED OUT IN ADVANCE BY STAFF. THIS GROUP MIGHT LIMIT ITSELF TO AN EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCES ON CERTAIN COMMON PROBLEMS OR IT MIGHT RECOMMEND A MORE DETAILED PROGRAM FOR COOPERATIVE ACTIVITIES IN CENTO. THIS TYPE OF EXCHANGE WOULD SERVE TWO PURPOSES: A) IT WOULD ELEVATE THE LEVEL OF DISCUSSION BY ENGAGING POLICY-LEVEL OFFICIALS AND B) IT WOULD BROADEN CONTACTS AMONG KEY OFFICIALS IN ALL MEMBER COUNTRIES, MAKE THEM MORE KEENLY AWARE OF EACH OTHER'S PROBLEMS AND PERHAPS GENERATE NEW
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IDEAS FOR INTENSIFYING COOPERATION AMONG MEMBER COUNTRIES.

7. WE WOULD UNDERLINE THE HYPOTHETICAL NATURE OF THE EXAMPLE. WHAT FIELDS WOULD BE MOST APPROPRIATE FOR THIS TYPE OF EXCHANGE DEPENDS IN LARGE MEASURE ON THE INTERESTS OF THE REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS, BOTH WITH REGARD TO THE IDEA ITSELF AND THE FIELDS OF GREATEST INTEREST TO THEM.

8. AS REGARDS NEW PROJECTS, SUCH AS THOSE SUGGESTED IN THE SECRETARIAT'S PAPER, IT WOULD BE PREMATURE FOR THE US TO EXPRESS VIEWS ON THEM. INSTEAD, WE BELIEVE THE REGIONAL COUNTRIES SHOULD JOINTLY EVOLVE THEIR VIEWS AND IDEAS, KEEPING IN MIND THE CRITERIA USED BY THE US. THE US IS PREPARED TO CONSIDER SYMPATHETICALLY PROJECTS WHICH ARE CONSISTENT WITH THOSE CRITERIA.

9. IN THE SECTION OF THE SECRETARIAT'S MEMORANDUM WHICH REFERS TO THE QUESTION OF AN INDUSTRIAL ADVISOR AND APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE STRUCTURE, THERE IS A SUGGESTION

FOR CONVENING A MEETING OF HIGH LEVEL PLANNING OFFICIALS
TO DISCUSS BOTH OVERALL OBJECTIVES FOR THE INDUSTRY AREA
AND SPECIFIC PROJECTS. WE BELIEVE THE BASIC IDEA HAS
MERIT BUT WOULD SUGGEST THAT THE AGENDA BE A BROADER ONE -
I.E., A DISCUSSION AMONG SUCH OFFICIALS DESIGNED TO
IDENTIFY FIELDS WHICH ARE OF COMMON PRIORITY INTEREST TO
THE REGIONAL COUNTRIES AND WAYS IN WHICH CENTO PROGRAMS
CAN BE OF GREATEST VALUE TO THEM. IF INDUSTRY IS ONE OF
THE FIELDS OF GREATEST INTEREST, THE PLANNING OFFICIALS
MIGHT IDENTIFY THOSE PROJECTS WHICH SEEM TO OFFER GREATEST
PROMISE FOR HANDLING WITHIN CENTO. RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH
EMERGED FROM SUCH A MEETING COULD THEN BE DISCUSSED BY THE
ECONOMIC COMMITTEE AT ITS NEXT MEETING. END TEXT. RUSH

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